

Items #49/50: Land Ownership

Evaluation Objectives: To evaluate the extent to which land ownership is affecting achievement of Forest Plan objectives.

Methods: Acres exchanged or purchased were summarized from case files.

Land Exchanges

Table 49-1: Land Exchanges on the Flathead National Forest

Case	Private Land Acres Flathead (decrease in federal land)	Federal Land Acres Flathead (increase in federal land)	Date
Gallatin #2	1108.73	0	1999
Carrel Oil Co.	0.0	172.06	1999
ATC #2	202.54	202.54	2001
Flathead County	2.90	3.73	2002
Little Lost Cr. MDWP	69.42	114.15	2004
TOTAL	1383.59	492.48	

Fee Purchase

Table 49-2: Fee Purchases on the Flathead National Forest

Case	Federal Acres Gained	Date
TPL Lindbergh Phase 1	2,506.44	1999-2000
TPL Swan Valley Phases 1-3	1,105.27	2001
Flathead County	5.92	2001
TPL Van Lake	1696.91	2003
Holt	5.0	2003
TPL Beaver S 19	599.59	2004
TPL Hemlock S 29	640	2004
TPL Beaver 2 Phases 1-2	640	2004-2005
TPL Beaver 3	800	2006
TPL Pierce Lake Phase 1	217.74	2006
TOTAL	8,217.	

Conservation Easements Donations

Table 49-3: Land Donations to the Flathead National Forest

Case	Acres Gained	Date
Donovan Donation	78.7	3/14/2003
Foreman Trust Donation	10.0	1/26/2007
Total	88.7	

Evaluation: Land adjustment activities are somewhat unpredictable, involving long timeframes and large expenses. Therefore, no specific goals or objectives were established in the Forest Plan.

The land exchange program is intended to improve the efficiency and quality of land management for the American public. The land purchase program is primarily associated with purchase from Plum Creek Timberlands within the grizzly bear linkage zones on the Swan Lake Ranger District and the wild and scenic river corridor.

Federal ownership increased by 8,799 acres in this time period with a net gain of 7,415 acres . Land purchases during 1998-2007 totaled 8,217 acres; all funded by Land and Water Conservation funds. All land purchases except 5.0 acres were from Plum Creek Timberlands, Co. are located in the Swan Valley on the Swan Lake Ranger District.

Due to the Montana Legacy Project, approximately 45,000 acres of Plum Creek Timberlands Company ownership in the Swan Valley will be added to the Flathead National Forest. These acquisitions will be a donation through The Nature Conservancy and Trust for Public Lands. Land acquisitions and related activities are expected to increase significantly over the next 10 years.

Recommended Actions: Continue monitoring.